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EARLY AMERICAN SILVER

Among the recent accessions to the Department of Early American Art is a collection of American silver, received through the generosity of J. H. Wade. As the Museum, prior to this gift, owned only one example of the work of American silversmiths the donation of Mr. Wade is of particular importance. It consists of sixteen pieces of which the oldest is a scroll-handled porringer (No. 8, p. 54) bearing the well-defined mark of William Jones (1694-1730), a silversmith of Marblehead, Massachusetts. As the maker was only thirty-six years of age at his death pieces made by him are rare and this is a fairly early example of the scroll handle. Although the name of porringer was used in England it was applied to a two handled cup with a cover, while the utensil which we know in this country as a porringer was in England used by surgeons in the practice of blood-letting, and was called a bleeding cup. Next in point of age is a tankard (No. 1, p. 42) seven and three-eighths inches in height including the domed cover, the work of John Burt, the progenitor of a well-known Boston family of silversmiths who worked throughout the nineteenth century. As Burt died in 1745 this tankard dates to at least that year, but doubtless not much earlier. Probably of nearly equal age is a mug (No. 3, p. 42) made by the New York silversmith, Thomas Hamersly, whose dates of birth and death have not been found, but who was engaged at his craft as early as 1756. A small beaker (No. 7, p. 54) three inches high, with a delicate "bright-cut" festooned border near the top, is the work of Isaac Hutton (1767-1855) of Albany, and dates from the period of 1800 to 1810.

Another example of a New York maker is a pair of sugar tongs which bear the mark of O P. These were made by Otto Parisien who became a freeman in 1769, about twenty-five years before these tongs were fashioned. Connecticut is represented in the work of Eli Mygatt (1742-1807) of Danbury, who toward the close of his life made another of the three pairs of sugar tongs in the collection. He was a man of considerable distinction and two of his sons followed in their father's trade. The third pair, with the ends shaped in the form of a fleur-de-lis, are marked G I enclosed in a rectangle with a cross before and after. This mark has not yet been identified.

Of the three creamers, one (No. 5, p. 53) six and one-half

inches high and of the shape known as "helmet," is marked I G enclosed in a rectangle probably the mark of John Germon, who was working in Philadelphia in 1788. Another creamer (No. 4, p. 53) which dates from about 1790 to 1810 stands six and one-eighth inches high and bears the mark of John McMullin (1765-1843) of Philadelphia. The third creamer (No. 6, p. 53) is probably the work of William Haverstick, also a Philadelphia maker, who appears there at least as early as 1779 and as late as 1794. Four teaspoons are marked W H enclosed in an oval which may be the mark either of William Hackle who was a silversmith in Philadelphia from 1765 to 1767 and is found in Baltimore in 1772, or of William Hollingshead who was working in Philadelphia in 1762. Further research will be necessary to clear up this question. Haverstick's mark also appears on an urn-shaped sugar-bowl (No. 2, p. 42) which measures, with its detachable cover, nine and one-eighth inches in height and is the largest piece in the collection. Another Philadelphia maker, John Aitken, working there in 1796, is represented by a plain beaker (No. 9, p. 54) three inches in height with a narrow moulded band at the top and base.

L. P.

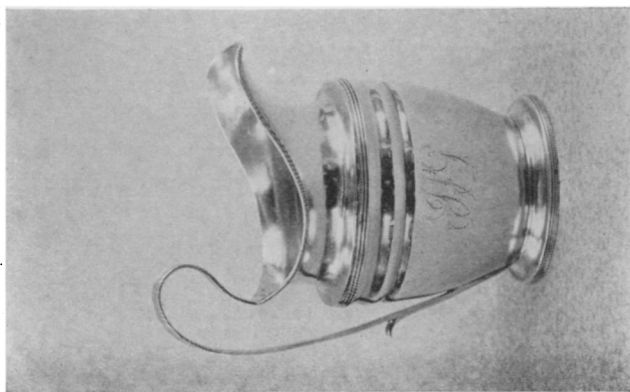
SWORD GUARDS IN THE MUSEUM

THE D. Z. NORTON COLLECTION

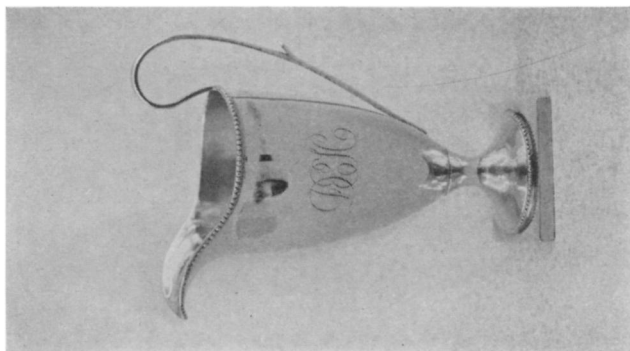
In the days of sword guards Japanese men did not wear jewelry as we know it, but they spent their pocket money just as lavishly in other ways. The medicine box (*inro*) which hung from the belt of every gentleman was elaborate, and more often than otherwise expensive. The pipe and tobacco case was also a source of personal extravagance and luxury. The little hooks and ingenious clasps and cords that fastened the outer garments (*haroi*) were made of precious metals, or carved and cunningly fashioned, to lure one to deeds of extravagance. But above all there was the serious business of selecting one's sword, (an invariable companion to every gentleman) as well as the sword furniture that went with it. Much money could be spent on the scabbard and metal fittings, the most necessary of which was the guard, *tsuba*, or the "object that clinches the blade."

The guard, like the sword, had to stand the test of strength, yet not be too heavy to interfere with dexterous handling of

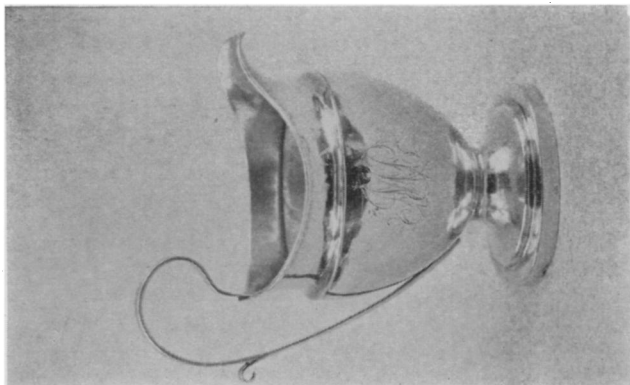
Early American Silver. Gift of J. H. Wade



No. 4 Creamer by John McMullin

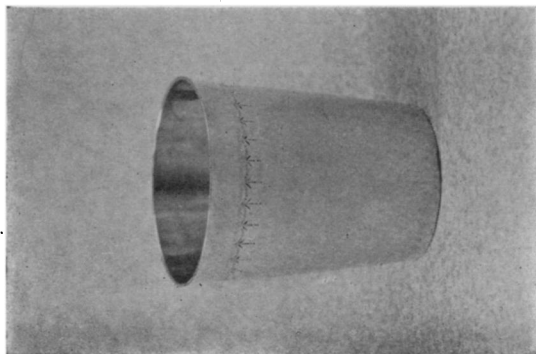


No. 5 Creamer
probably by John Germon

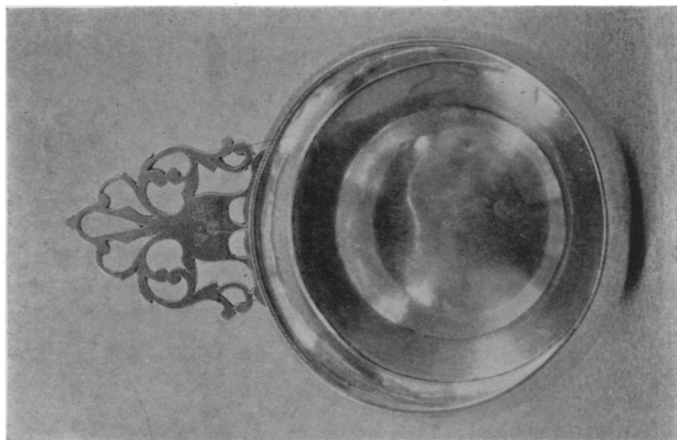


No. 6 Creamer by William Haverstick

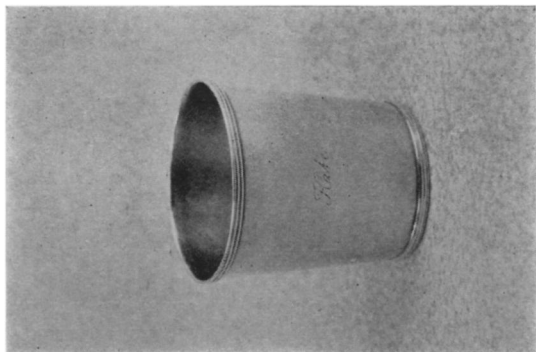
Early American Silver. Gift of J. H. Wade



No. 7 Beaker by Isaac Hutton

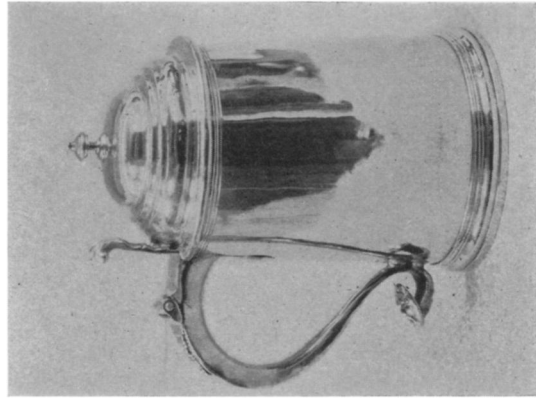


No. 8 Porringer by William Jones

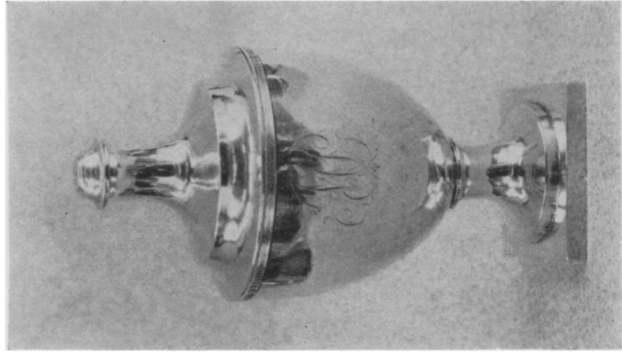


No. 9 Beaker by John Aitken

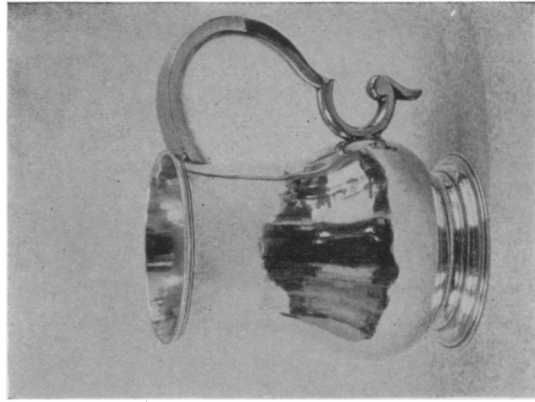
Early American Silver. Gift of J. H. Wade



No. 1 Tankard by John Burt



No. 2 Sugar-bowl!
by William Haverstick



No. 3 Mug by Thomas Hamersly